DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 267 051 SP 027 335

TITLE Student Activities in Illinois High Schools.
INSTITUTION Illinois State Board of Education, Springfield, Dept. of Planning, Research and Evaluation.
PUB DATE Nov 85
NOTE 34p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; *Extracurricular Activities; High Schools; *High School Students; Public Schools; Recreational Activities; Self Concept; Student Characteristics; *Student Participation
IDENTIFIERS Illinois

ABSTRACT

This survey identified the differences between those students who participate in extracurricular activities and those who do not. A comparison was also made of participation patterns of Illinois sophomores and seniors to their counterparts in the nation. The Illinois sample consisted of 3,393 students from 63 public high schools. Information is presented on: (1) types of extracurricular activities; (2) differences in participation for students in general, academic, and vocational programs; (3) relationship between grades and degree of participation; (4) influence of paid work commitments; (5) relationship between participation and discipline problems; (6) perception of school quality/effectiveness of those who participate and those who do not; (7) relationship between participation and self-concept; and (8) relationship between participation and family background. (JD)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

SP

# STUDENT ACTIVITIES IN ILLINOIS HIGH SCHOOLS

ED267051

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Department of Planning, Research and Evaluation
Research and Statistics Section

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

November, 1985

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
D. G. Gill
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Walter W. Naumer, Jr., Chairman
Illinois State Board of Education

Ted Sanders
State Superintendent of Education

SP 027 335

## FOREWORD

This report was prepared from data obtained from the 1980 High School and Beyond national study to analyze the extracurricular activity participation patterns among Illinois high school students. Edith Helmich, M.A., from the Research and Statistics Section was responsible for the analysis of data and preparation of the written report. Appreciation is extended to Dr. Robert L. Buser, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale for his assistance in the preliminary analysis. The interpretations and conclusions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the State Board of Education.

Ted Sanders
State Superintendent

TABLE OF CONTENTS


| | PAGE |
|---|---|
| Purpose | 1 |
| Methodology | 2 |
| Illinois Student Data | 2 |
| Type of Extracurricular Activities | 2 |
| Instructional Program | 5 |
| Achievement (Grades/ Homework | 6 |
| Paid Work Commitment | 6 |
| Disciplinary Problems | 6 |
| Perception of School Quality/Effectiveness | 8 |
| Self-Concept | 9 |
| Family Background | 12 |
| State/National Comparisons | 13 |
| Types of Extracurricular Activities | 14 |
| Instructional Program | 15 |
| Achievement | 17 |
| Self-Concept | 18 |
| Summary of Findings | 20 |
| Conclusions | 23 |
| References | 25 |
| Appendix | 26 |

TABLE OF TABLES


Page

Table

1: Ranking of Activities by Percent of Participation for Sophomores and Seniors. . . . . 4

2: Comparison of State and National Participation Levels by Grade . . . . . 13

3: Comparison of Activities by Percent of Participation for Sophomores and Seniors in Illinois and the Nation . . 14

4: Comparison of State/National Participation Levels by Program Type and Race/Ethnic Origin. . . . . 16

5: Comparison of State/National Participation Levels by Grades. . . . . 17

6: Comparison of State/National Participation Levels by Positive Attitude toward Self and Sex . . . . . 19

Figure

1: Level of Participation by Grades for Illinois Sophomores and Seniors . . . . . 7

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES IN ILLINOIS HIGH SCHOOLS

### Purpose

Extracurricular activities are commonly offered in schools and are generally considered to be an important component of the educational experience offered to students. Over the past several years, questions regarding extracurricular activities have been included in some of the Gallup Poll national surveys. In 1978, the Gallup Poll data reported that 51% of parents with high school children regarded student activities as "very important" and another 40% regarded them as "fairly important." This survey further reported that adult respondents placed student activities as fourth in importance among ten subjects and experiences in which they participated during their high school years. Results of a recent Gallup Poll (1983) reported that parents assigned the following grades to the public school's handling of extracurricular activities: A, 20%; B, 33%; C, 26%; D, Fail or Don't Know, 21%. The 1983 Gallup Poll survey also reported that 85% of public school parents attended a school athletic event, play or concert during the 1982-83 school year. These data would seem to indicate that parents of school-age students place an importance on and are interested in the extracurricular activities offered within a school. The data further suggest that approximately half of the parents rated schools' extracurricular offerings as either mediocre or poor.

Long, Buser and Jackson (1977) reported that students value active participation in extracurricular activities as the most viable means of establishing status and acceptance among their peers. In a review of research concerning the role of secondary schools in adolescent development, Hamilton (1983) concluded that schools provide the principal arena for peer group formation and an opportunity for adolescents to develop social skills. Schools also teach students how to behave in formal organizations which correspond to adult experiences.

Since school programs commonly offer a variety of voluntary activities which typically carry no credit toward graduation, it is reasonable to assume that most school administrators concur in the belief that extracurricular activities are of value and benefit to students. Coleman (1961) and Bronfenbrenner (1970) found that schools are capable of controlling peer influence to produce socially valued behavior and emphasized the responsibility inherent in such influence by discussing peer group manipulation in Soviet schools. They concluded that school-sponsored, peer-group activities take the form that adults encourage and allow.

Although extracurricular activities are not mandated by Illinois statute, regulations in the State Board of Education Document 1 (Section 4-2.13) require that cocurricular activities provide opportunities for all students and that the selection of such activities must take student body desires into account. Therefore, an analysis of who takes part in student activities in Illinois schools is appropriate.

The primary objective of this report is to identify the differences between those students who participate in extracurricular activities and those who do not. A second objective is to compare the participation patterns of Illinois sophomores and seniors to their counterparts in the nation to determine how the participation of Illinois students differs, if any, from national figures.

## Methodology

Data contained in this report were collected as part of the 1980 High School and Beyond Study, a national longitudinal study of high school sophomores and seniors sponsored by the United States Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. A stratified sample of sophomore and senior students was selected to be representative of the student populations. The Illinois sample consisted of 3,393 students: 1,813 sophomores and 1,580 seniors from 63 public high schools. Subgroups were judged to be representative of general population distributions by sex and race. Accordingly, responses from this sample group are reported as representative of the responses of all Illinois sophomores and seniors. Despite efforts to select a statistically valid sample, sampling errors may be reflected in the data, particularly in instances where subgroups represent small populations.

Data are limited to the responses of participants who completed comprehensive questionnaires concerning their backgrounds, high school experiences and post-secondary plans. Frequency and pattern of responses for groups of students were analyzed. Respondents were divided into three groups for the purpose of analysis: students who were inactive (0 activities); students who were moderately active (1 or 2 activities); and students who were highly active (3 or more activities). The proportion of sophomore and senior students reporting a relationship with selected variables was analyzed to identify participation patterns. Further analysis by sex and race/ethnic origin was conducted on selected variables. Cause and effect relationships were not examined, and there was no attempt to assess the importance or impact of student participation in extracurricular activities on the educational experience.

Statistical significance throughout the report denotes $p > .95$ which means that more than 95 times out of 100, the differences between the groups will not be the result of chance or sampling error.

## Illinois Student Data

### Type of Extracurricular Activities

Students were asked to identify the activities in which they participated. From a list of sixteen activities (See Table 1), both sophomore and senior students reported sports (Other Sports and Varsity Sports) as the most popular student activity. Table 1 shows that more than half of the students participated in sports. Church activities (out of school) ranked second in student participation. Other activities receiving very high rankings were subject-matter clubs, chorus or dance and hobby clubs.

Differences between the rankings of sophomore and senior student activities were not dramatic, except for band or orchestra where participation was reported almost twice as frequently by sophomores. Some activities may have been unavailable to sophomores and, thus, more prevalent among seniors, i.e., honorary clubs. Low proportions of participation for some activities may be attributable to eligibility criteria which restrict participation, i.e., co-op clubs. Participation in other activities has been limited by the small number of memberships available, i.e., school newspaper. Still other activities were structured for specific, student-interest groups, and there may have been curricular requirements for participation, i.e., subject-matter clubs.

Participation in student government was not reported for sophomore students. Among seniors, only about one in ten students reported that they had participated in student government activities. This disturbingly low participation rate merits scrutiny since a basic purpose of schooling is to prepare students to be responsible citizens. Our democracy is dependent on active citizen participation in the government and its processes: voting, holding elected office, and committee membership. These experiences are appropriate extracurricular activities for schools to offer and promote, particularly for seniors who will be eligible to vote prior to or soon after high school graduation. Whether the low participation rate is due to student apathy or the lack of appropriate opportunities for participation cannot be determined by the information available at this time.

Interestingly, the two out-of-school activities included in the listing ranked in the top five for sophomores and in the top eight for seniors. They were church activities and community youth clubs.

Table 1: Ranking of Activities by Percent of Participation for Sophomores and Seniors

| Rank | Sophomores | % | Rank | Seniors | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Other Sports | 53.0 | 1 | Other Sports | 34.0 |
| 2 | Church Activities* | 36.8 | 2 | Church Activities* | 27.0 |
| 3 | Subject Matter Clubs | 26.8 | 3 | Varsity Sports | 22.0 |
| 4 | Chorus or Dance | 22.1 | 4 | Subject Matter Clubs | 16.6 |
| 5 | Community Youth Clubs* | 19.9 | 5 | Chorus or Dance | 16.6 |
| 6 | Hobby Clubs | 19.3 | 6 | Hobby Clubs | 15.9 |
| 7 | Band or Orchestra | 17.4 | 7 | Honorary Clubs | 15.1 |
| 8 | Cheer Leaders/Pep Club | 15.7 | 8 | Community Youth Clubs* | 13.2 |
| 9 | Vocational Ed. Clubs | 11.4 | 9 | School Newspaper | 12.7 |
| 10 | Debate or Drama | 9.1 | 10 | Vocational Ed. Clubs | 12.4 |
| 11 | Jr. Achievement | 6.3 | 11 | Student Government | 9.9 |
| 12 | Co-op Club | 2.0 | 12 | Cheer Leaders/Pep Club | 9.5 |
| 13 | Varsity Sports | - | 13 | Debate or Drama | 9.5 |
| 14 | Honorary Clubs | - | 14 | Band or Orchestra | 8.9 |
| 15 | School Newspaper | - | 15 | Jr. Achievement | 4.7 |
| 16 | Student Government | - | 16 | Co-op Club | - |

*Out-of-school Activities

In terms of sex, male sophomores participated in significantly larger proportions than female sophomores only in other sports. Female sophomores participated in significantly larger proportions than males in cheerleaders/pep club, chorus/dance and subject-matter clubs. Male seniors participated in significantly higher proportions than females in varsity sports, other sports, and hobby clubs, while female seniors were significantly more likely to participate in cheerleaders/pep club and chorus/dance. Differences in the types of activities males and females chose for participation tended to follow traditional stereotypes, particularly for seniors.

Differences in types of activities in which different racial groups participated were few. On the sophomore level, significantly larger proportions of black students participated in chorus/dance and Junior Achievement than did white or Hispanic students. Black and white seniors participated in essentially the same proportions in all remaining activities.

Instructional Program

Differences in participation were reported for students in general, academic, and vocational programs. For sophomores, approximately 1 in 4 vocational students reported being inactive, or participating in zero activities, compared to 1 in 5 for students in a general program and 1 in 10 for students in an academic program. Data reports that approximately 1 in 5 seniors in vocational and general programs were inactive, but less than 1 in 10 students in an academic program were inactive. For both sophomores and seniors, students enrolled in academic programs had significantly larger proportions of participation than did students in vocational or general programs.

A significantly smaller proportion of white students in academic programs were inactive and significantly larger proportions were highly active compared to white students in general or vocational programs. Hispanic students were equally likely to be inactive regardless of program type, but significantly more Hispanic sophomore students enrolled in a general program were highly active. Hispanic seniors enrolled in general or academic programs were significantly more likely to be highly active than those in a vocational program. Black students enrolled in academic programs were significantly more likely to be highly active than those in general or vocational programs, while black students in general programs were significantly more likely to be moderately active. Program type did not affect the proportions of black seniors who were inactive, but significantly more black sophomores in vocational programs were inactive compared to those in academic or general programs.

For both male and female students in academic programs, showed significantly fewer inactive students. Female sophomores had significantly larger proportions of highly active students irregardless of program type than did males, but this difference was not present for seniors where the proportions of highly active males and females were not significantly different within the three programs.

Achievement (Grades/Homework)

Among seniors, a direct relationship was shown between grades and degree of participation in activities--the higher the groups' grade average, the greater the degree of participation and number of activities. One exception was observed for seniors at the academic failure level (Below D) where more than a third of the students were highly active. Among sophomores, the same relationship was shown except that sophomores were clustered in the moderately active group, rather than the highly active group. Figure 1 displays the distribution of sophomores and seniors by grade average groups and degree of participation.

Among males and females at the sophomore level, significantly more females with B, C, D or failing grade averages were in the highly active group except for students with an A average where there were no significant differences in proportions of males and females. Significantly more sophomore males with failing averages were in the inactive group than were females. Among seniors, there were no significant differences between males and females except at the D and failing levels where males show a significantly larger proportion of participation in activities.

A direct relationship between the amount of homework per week and the degree of involvement in activities was observed for both sophomores and seniors. As with grades, the groups with more time spent on homework had larger proportions of participation. As the number of hours per week spent on homework decreased, the number of students who were inactive increased. This relationship held constant for both seniors and sophomores. Students who reported that no homework was assigned to them were about equally likely to be participants or nonparticipants, with significantly more seniors than sophomores in this group falling into the highly active category.

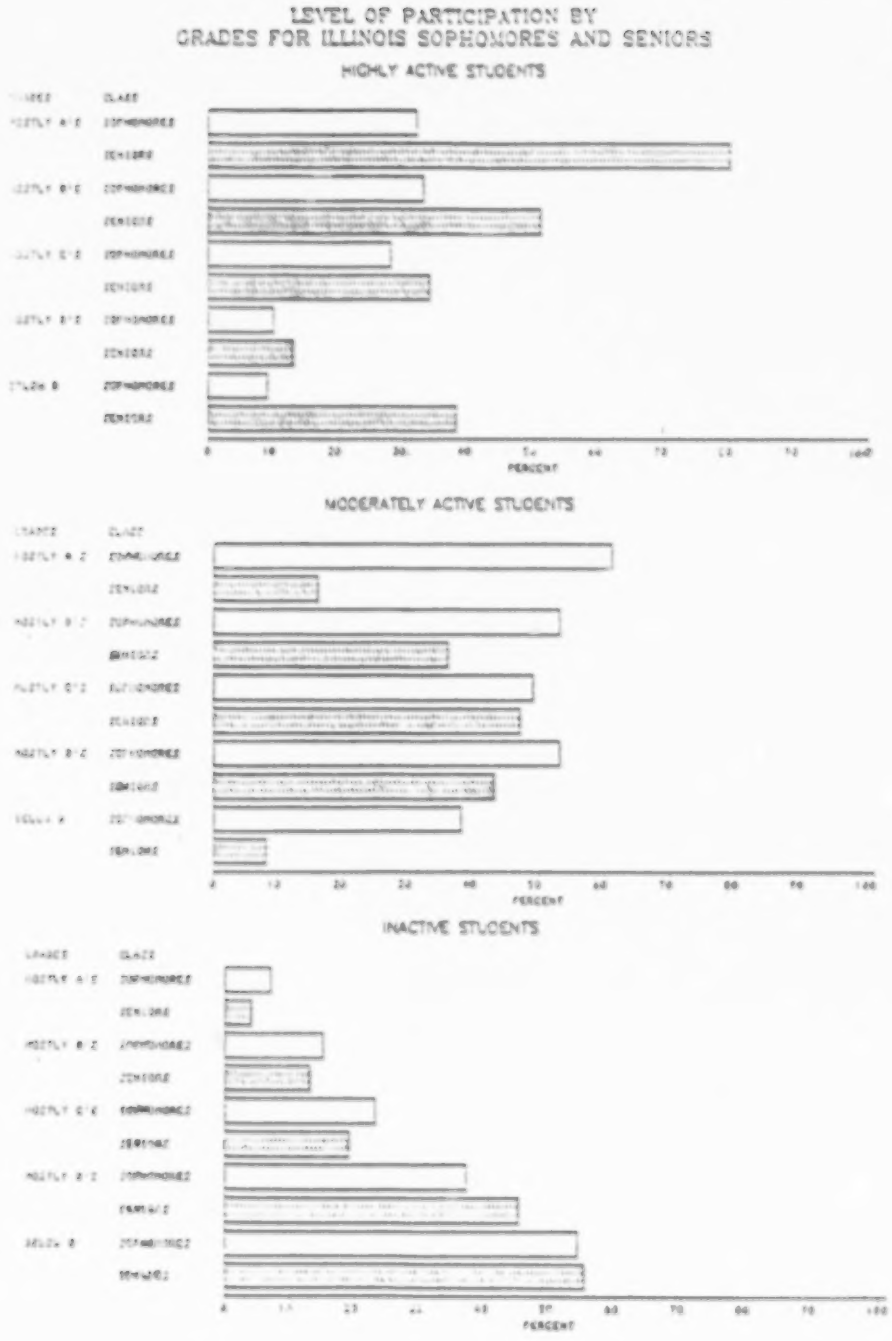
Paid Work Commitment

There were no significant differences in participation between those sophomores and seniors who did or did not work for pay, nor did the number of hours worked per week affect participation.

Disciplinary Problems

Six questions from the High School and Beyond Questionnaire were selected as indicators of disciplinary problems. Analysis of each in terms of the participation level of students follows.

Figure 1




BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Quality of discipline in school - There were no significant differences in the proportion of participation between sophomore students rating the quality of discipline on a scale of poor to excellent. Significantly more seniors in the group rating discipline as excellent were highly active compared to the group rating discipline as poor.

Fairness of discipline in school - Significantly lower proportions of students in the sophomore and senior groups rating fairness as excellent were inactive and significantly higher proportions were highly active compared to groups rating fairness as poor. Sophomores and seniors rating fairness as poor accounted for about a third of the inactive students. Approximately two-thirds of inactive sophomore and senior students rated fairness as fair, good or excellent.

Cut classes now and then - Significantly lower proportions of inactive, compared to highly active sophomore students denied this statement. Sophomores who admitted that they cut classes accounted for approximately a third of inactive sophomores although the group which denied cutting classes was twice as large. Among seniors, the same pattern appeared in regard to inactive compared to highly active students, but the seniors who agreed that they cut classes accounted for 40.8% of the 16.2% of seniors who were inactive.

Admission of disciplinary problems - Among sophomores, the group that reported having had disciplinary problems had significantly higher proportions of inactive students. The senior group admitting discipline problems had significantly higher proportions of inactive students and significantly lower proportions of highly active students. Seniors who had experienced discipline problems accounted for 13.9% of all seniors and approximately one-fourth of inactive seniors; three-quarters of the inactive seniors reported no discipline problems.

Suspension/Probation - Approximately 12% of all sophomores and seniors reported having been placed on suspension or probation. This group accounted for 18% of the inactive sophomores and 22% of the inactive seniors. Significantly larger proportions of students who had not experienced suspension or probation were highly active.

Serious trouble with the law - Only approximately 5% of sophomores and seniors reported having serious trouble with the law. These groups accounted for approximately 8% of the inactive students at both sophomore and senior levels. Although these groups have significantly larger proportions of inactive students compared to students who were not having problems with the law, approximately 70% of sophomore and senior lawbreakers were moderately or highly active.

Perception of School Quality/Effectiveness

Satisfaction with education - Both sophomores and seniors who were satisfied with the education they received had significantly lower proportions of inactive students and significantly higher proportions of moderately and/or highly active students. Students who were not

satisfied with their education accounted for 49% of the inactive sophomores and 42.6% of the inactive seniors. Approximately two-thirds of both sophomores and seniors were satisfied with their education.

The proportions of white and Hispanic sophomore students who were satisfied with their education and yet were inactive were almost twice as large as the black inactive students in this group. Further, the proportion of black sophomore students who were dissatisfied with their education but were highly active, was significantly larger than the proportions of white or Hispanic students. Among seniors, Hispanic students had the largest proportion of inactive students who were satisfied with their education and barely half as many highly active students (proportionately) as did white or black students.

Quality of academic instruction - A direct relationship can be seen between student perception of the quality of instruction and the proportion of inactive students: Proportions of inactive sophomore students by ratings are 30.3%, poor; 18.1%, fair; 15.6% good; and 9.9%, excellent. Sophomore students rating quality as fair, poor, or Don't Know account for 54.9% of the inactive students although these groups represent only 10% of the total sophomore population. Seniors showed the same pattern, with 50.8% of the inactive group being comprised of 8.2% of the total senior population.

School spirit - The differences in groups rating their school's spirit as poor, fair, good or excellent are not extreme for moderately and highly active students. Sophomores rating school spirit as fair or poor account for 39% of all inactive sophomores, but only 7.1% of the total sophomore population. Seniors rating school spirit as fair or poor account for 50.3% of inactive seniors, but only 8.1% of the total senior population. The remaining 48.7% of inactive seniors rated spirit as good or excellent and represent 6.1% of the senior population.

School's reputation in the community - A significantly larger proportion of sophomore students rating their school's reputation as poor were inactive; however, this group accounted for only 13.6% of the inactive sophomores. More than 96% of inactive sophomores rated the school's reputation as fair, good or excellent. Significantly smaller proportions of highly active sophomores were in the group that gave a poor rating, and significantly more had moderate activity levels than the groups awarding higher ratings. A direct relationship between ratings and participation levels was reported for seniors--as ratings go up, the proportion of inactive students decreases and the proportion of highly active students increases. However, highly active seniors who rated their school's reputation as excellent account for only 12% of the highly active seniors, while inactive seniors who rated their school's reputation as poor account for only 17.9% of inactive seniors.

Self-Concept

Positive attitude toward self - Eighty-two percent of all sophomores reported having a positive attitude toward themselves. Slightly more

than 7.8% of sophomores reported that they did not have a positive attitude toward themselves, and 10.5% reported a "no opinion" response. Negative responses accounted for approximately 11% of the inactive sophomores; those with no opinion accounted for about 14% of the inactive sophomores. Those students with negative responses accounted for 11% of highly active sophomore students. Among seniors, there were no consistent patterns of participation difference between the groups agreeing or disagreeing with the statement. Only 5.5% of seniors reported a "no opinion" response, and students in this group were equally likely to be inactive, moderately or highly active. Approximately 94% of seniors reported a positive attitude toward themselves.

Differences in participation on the basis of positive attitudes were present when the groups were divided by sex. More male sophomores than females strongly agreed that they had a positive attitude toward themselves, but females in this group had significantly higher proportions of highly active students than the males. Conversely, almost four times as many sophomore females reported that they did not have a positive attitude toward themselves, but females still had significantly higher proportions of highly active students. Among sophomores who strongly disagreed that they held positive attitudes toward themselves, males were four times as likely to be inactive as females. There were no differences between senior males and females with positive attitudes, but a significantly higher proportion of males who disagreed or strongly disagreed were inactive than were females. Senior males who strongly disagreed also had a significantly larger proportion of highly active students than did females. In summary, for seniors, a strong negative attitude seemed to categorize males as being either inactive or highly active. It should be noted, however, that the highly negative groups represented only about 2% of either the sophomore or senior populations, and groups with negative attitudes represented less than 15% of either population.

When responses were analyzed on a race/ethnic origin basis, several differences were observed. Significantly higher proportions of sophomore Hispanic students who strongly agreed that they had a positive attitude toward themselves were inactive, while significantly greater proportions of black students in this category were highly active. Across all sophomore responses, significantly smaller proportions of black students were inactive. Among sophomores who disagreed that they felt positively toward themselves, significantly larger proportions of black than Hispanic students were highly active, and significantly larger proportions of both these groups were highly active than were white students. Seniors in all race/ethnic origin groups who reported a strong positive attitude showed no differences in participation levels. Seniors who reported a positive attitude had significantly larger proportions of inactive Hispanic students and significantly smaller proportions of highly active Hispanic students. Seniors who reported they did not have a positive attitude had the following significant differences: black students had the smallest proportion of inactive

students and the largest proportion of highly active students; Hispanic students had the largest proportion of moderately active students and the smallest proportion of highly active students; white students had the largest proportion of inactive students. Among seniors who reported a strong negative attitude toward themselves, there were no Hispanic students, 100% of black students were either moderately or highly active, and about 87% of white students were either moderately or highly active.

Worth is comparable to others - More than 85% of both sophomores and seniors agreed that they were a person of worth (on an equal plane with others), and 9.4% of sophomores and 4.8% of seniors had no opinion on this question. Significantly larger proportions of the groups for both grade levels who strongly disagreed with this question were inactive, but the groups accounted for less than 1% of the grade-level populations and less than 1% of the inactive students for either grade level.

Feelings of personal worth were related to participation levels differentially for males and females. Although from 85% to 90% of both male and female students at the sophomore and senior levels reported that they agreed that they were a person of worth, the proportions of students reporting a "no opinion" answer was reduced by almost half for both male and female seniors. Of the sophomores who disagreed with the statement, a significantly larger proportion of males were inactive. Regardless of response, significantly higher proportions of sophomore females were highly active. There were no significant differences between participation levels for male and female seniors regardless of response, except for students who strongly disagreed, where 100% of senior females were either moderately or highly active and more than half of the senior males were inactive.

Able to do things as well as others - Among sophomores, there was a direct relationship between the students' opinions of how their abilities compared to others' abilities--the degree of disagreement increased for inactive students, and the degree of agreement with the statement increased for highly active students. However, since only 8% of sophomores disagreed with the statement, this group accounted for about 11% of inactive sophomores. Among seniors, no significant differences were found.

Attribution of success to good luck rather than hard work - Proportions of inactive, moderately or highly active students were not significantly different for students who agreed or disagreed with this statement.

Interest in school - Approximately 1 in 4 of sophomore and senior students who reported that they were not interested in school were inactive, compared to 1.5 in 10 who were interested in school. Students who were not interested in school accounted for approximately 36% of the inactive sophomores and 39% of the inactive seniors, but only about one-fourth of the total sophomore and senior populations. Significantly larger proportions of interested sophomores and seniors were highly active than the respective groups indicating a lack of interest.

## Family Background

Family income - No consistent patterns of participation were reported on the basis of family income for either sophomores or seniors.

Family income levels showed some differences among participation levels on the basis of race/ethnic origins. Among sophomore students from low-income families (under $12,000/yr.), Hispanic students reported the lowest proportion of highly active students. Among middle-income sophomore families ($12-20,000/yr.), white students reported the lowest proportion of highly active students. Among higher income sophomore families (over $20,000/yr.), Hispanic students have the highest proportion of inactive students. In the senior population, black students have the smallest proportion of inactive students from the low-income group--half as large as white students and one-fifth as large as Hispanic students. No significant differences were reported in the proportions of moderately or highly active black and white senior students across all income groups. Hispanic senior students had consistently lower proportions of highly active students across all income groups.

Male and female differences in participation on the basis of family income were few and inconsistent. Female sophomores from families earning over $20,000/yr. (highest income group) participated at the highly active level in significantly greater proportions than did males in this group. Among seniors, there were no significant differences between males and females within the three income levels.

Attendance at religious services - No consistent patterns of participation were reported on the basis of frequency of church attendance for either sophomores or seniors.

## State/National Comparisons

Selected data were chosen for state/national comparison as being broadly representative of students who do or do not participate in school activities.

### Level of Participation

Illinois students reported the same proportional distributions among the three activity levels as did students in the national study. As shown in Table 2, proportions are almost identical and no significant differences were found.

Table 2: Comparison of State and National Participation Levels by Grade

| Level of Participation | Estimated Percentages* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sophomores | | Seniors | |
| | Illinois | National | Illinois | National |
| Inactive (0 Activities) | 20% | 18% | 17% | 15% |
| Moderately Active (1-2 Activities) | 50% | 51% | 37% | 36% |
| Highly Active (3+ Activities) | 30% | 31% | 46% | 49% |
| Estimated Totals | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

*Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

## Type of Activities

The types of activities in which Illinois students participated did not significantly differ from those chosen by other sophomore and senior students in the nation. As reported in Table 3, the proportions of students participating in the selected activities are comparable. Sports and church activities encompass the greatest proportions of students, and Co-op Clubs and Jr. Achievement encompass the smallest proportion for both Illinois and the nation.

Table 3: Comparison of Activities by Percent of Participation for Sophomores and Seniors in Illinois and the Nation

| Sophomores | % | | Seniors | % | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Ill. | National | | Ill. | National |
| Other Sports | 53.0 | 53.3 | Other Sports | 34.0 | 30.8 |
| Church Activities* | 36.8 | 39.0 | Church Activities* | 27.0 | 28.0 |
| Subject-Matter Clubs | 26.8 | 26.0 | Varsity Sports | 22.0 | 21.3 |
| Chorus or Dance | 22.1 | 22.5 | Subject-Matter Clubs | 16.6 | 19.1 |
| Community Youth Clubs* | 19.9 | 20.0 | Chorus or Dance | 16.6 | 17.2 |
| Hobby Clubs | 19.3 | 21.4 | Hobby Clubs | 15.9 | 19.3 |
| Band or Orchestra | 17.4 | 16.7 | Honorary Clubs | 15.1 | 13.7 |
| Cheerleaders/Pep Club | 15.7 | 14.3 | Community Youth Clubs* | 13.2 | 14.5 |
| Vocational Ed. Clubs | 11.4 | 15.1 | School Newspaper | 12.7 | 13.1 |
| Debate or Drama | 9.1 | 10.2 | Vocational Ed. Clubs | 12.4 | 17.5 |
| Jr. Achievement | 6.3 | 6.5 | Student Government | 9.9 | 11.2 |
| Co-op Club | 2.0 | 2.2 | Cheerleaders/Pep Club | 9.5 | 11.8 |
| Varsity Sports | - | | Debate or Drama | 9.5 | 11.0 |
| Honorary Clubs | - | | Band or Orchestra | 8.9 | 10.9 |
| School Newspaper | - | | Jr. Achievement | 4.7 | 4.3 |
| Student Government | - | | Co-op Club | - | |

*Out-of-school Activities

Instructional Program

Activity levels between and among students enrolled in general, academic and vocational programs were not significantly different for Illinois students compared to other students in the nation, except for senior Hispanic students in vocational programs. As shown in Table 4, Illinois Hispanic senior students in vocational programs were significantly more likely to be inactive and significantly less likely to be highly active than the comparable national group. These differences may be a function of the Illinois sample since Hispanic students constitute a much smaller proportion of the Illinois student population than do the other two groups.

Table 4: Comparison of State/National Participation Levels
by Program Type and Race/Ethnic Origin

| PROGRAM TYPE | Estimated Percent of Participation - SOPHOMORES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 0 Activities | | | | | | 1-2 Activities | | | | | | 3+ Activities | | | | | |
| | Black | | White | | Hispanic | | Black | | White | | Hispanic | | Black | | White | | Hispanic | |
| | IL | Nat | IL | Nat | IL | Nat | IL | Nat | IL | Nat | IL | Nat | IL | Nat | IL | Nat | IL | Nat |
| General | 14.5 | 18.5 | 21.2 | 20.1 | 22.5 | 23.4 | 50.7 | 47.0 | 50.5 | 51.8 | 44.5 | 47.6 | 34.7 | 34.5 | 28.3 | 28.1 | 33.0 | 29.0 |
| Academic | 7.9 | 11.4 | 9.6 | 10.7 | 26.9 | 24.6 | 35.9 | 47.7 | 56.1 | 52.0 | 51.0 | 45.9 | 56.3 | 40.8 | 34.3 | 37.3 | 22.1 | 29.5 |
| Vocational | 21.5 | 18.2 | 23.0 | 23.0 | 30.8 | 24.2 | 45.4 | 43.6 | 51.2 | 50.6 | 33.1 | 48.2 | 33.1 | 38.2 | 25.8 | 26.4 | 21.0 | 27.7 |
| | Estimated Percent of Participation - Seniors | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| General | 14.5 | 17.0 | 22.6 | 18.2 | 17.4 | 20.4 | 45.3 | 36.4 | 36.5 | 38.3 | 50.5 | 39.3 | 40.2 | 46.6 | 40.9 | 43.4 | 32.1 | 40.3 |
| Academic | 15.2 | 7.8 | 58.8 | 7.0 | 7.9* | 13.8 | 32.0 | 30.2 | 32.8 | 30.2 | 52.7* | 34.5 | 52.8 | 61.9 | 61.5 | 62.8 | 39.4* | 51.8 |
| Vocational | 18.6 | 14.3 | 20.9 | 19.2 | 45.0 | 22.4 | 33.4 | 36.0 | 44.3 | 42.5 | 37.2 | 37.2 | 47.9 | 49.7 | 34.8 | 38.3 | 17.7 | 40.4 |

*Significant at p > .95

Achievement

Using grades as the primary indicator of student achievement, Illinois student activity levels differed from students in the nation in only the highest and lowest grade categories. As reported in Table 5, Illinois sophomores, with "mostly A's" were significantly more likely to be moderately active and sophomores in the nation were more likely to be highly active. For seniors, students in the nation in the "Below D" category had significantly larger proportions of moderately active students, while Illinois students had significantly larger proportions of both inactive and highly active students. The reason for these differences is unclear.

Table 5: Comparison of State/National Participation Levels by Grades

| Grades Reported by Students | Sophomores | | | | | | Seniors | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimated Percent of Participation | | | | | | Estimated Percent of Participation | | | | | |
| | 0 Activities | | 1-2 Activities | | 3+ Activities | | 0 Activities | | 1-2 Activities | | 3+ Activities | |
| | IL | Nat. | IL | Nat. | IL | Nat. | IL | Nat. | IL | Nat. | IL | Nat. |
| Mostly A's | 7.1 | 9.5 | 60.6* | 46.9 | 32.3* | 43.6 | 4.0 | 5.1 | 15.7 | 20.7 | 80.3 | 74.2 |
| Mostly B's | 15.0 | 14.3 | 52.5 | 51.6 | 32.6 | 34.1 | 12.5 | 13.4 | 36.4 | 35.9 | 51.0 | 50.7 |
| Mostly C's | 22.9 | 22.2 | 49.0 | 53.0 | 28.2 | 24.8 | 19.3 | 20.0 | 46.6 | 43.9 | 34.1 | 36.1 |
| Mostly D's | 36.8 | 35.5 | 52.8 | 47.9 | 10.4 | 16.6 | 44.7 | 33.2 | 42.7 | 45.2 | 12.6 | 21.6 |
| Below D (Failing) | 53.5* | 39.0 | 37.9 | 41.4 | 8.6* | 19.6 | 54.5* | 41.7 | 8.1* | 42.8 | 37.5* | 15.5 |

* Significant at p>.95

## Self-Concept

A positive attitude toward self was selected for comparison of Illinois and national students since this response is a more general statement of self-concept than others used in the study. On the basis of positive and negative responses, Illinois students' activity levels differed from those of students in the nation. Table 6 reports that Illinois male sophomores with negative responses were significantly more likely to be inactive and less likely to be highly active than national students. Among seniors, Illinois female students with positive attitudes were significantly less likely to be highly active, while those with negative attitudes were significantly more likely to be inactive than female seniors in the nation.

Table 6: Comparison of State/National Participation Levels By Positive Attitude Toward Self and Sex

| I have a positive attitude toward myself | Estimated Percent of Participation - Sophomores | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 0 Activities | | | | 1-2 Activities | | | | 3+ Activities | | | |
| | Male | | Female | | Male | | Female | | Male | | Female | |
| | IL | Nat. | IL | Nat. | IL | Nat. | IL | Nat. | IL | Nat. | IL | Nat. |
| Agree Strongly | 12.6 | 13.2 | 11.5 | 13.7 | 61.9 | 56.4 | 40.3 | 41.4 | 25.4 | 30.5 | 48.2 | 45.0 |
| Agree | 18.5 | 17.1 | 17.3 | 16.3 | 57.6 | 58.2 | 44.8 | 46.5 | 23.9 | 24.7 | 37.9 | 37.2 |
| Disagree | 27.0 | 22.3 | 31.8* | 20.2 | 61.1* | 52.1 | 37.0* | 45.2 | 11.8* | 25.6 | 31.2 | 34.6 |
| Disagree Strongly | 44.9* | 26.2 | 10.4* | 25.9 | 41.4 | 42.9 | 63.5* | 41.3 | 13.6* | 30.8 | 26.1 | 32.8 |
| No Opinion | 26.6 | 28.2 | 22.0 | 24.3 | 59.6* | 53.6 | 49.9 | 47.7 | 13.8 | 18.2 | 28.1 | 28.0 |
| | Estimated Percent of Participation - Seniors | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Agree Strongly | 11.8 | 11.6 | 14.1 | 10.5 | 32.3 | 35.6 | 35.5 | 31.2 | 55.9 | 52.8 | 50.4* | 58.3 |
| Agree | 13.6 | 15.0 | 17.5 | 13.4 | 42.4 | 39.7 | 38.2 | 34.8 | 43.9 | 45.2 | 44.4* | 51.9 |
| Disagree | 34.5* | 18.4 | 17.3 | 17.6 | 32.4* | 39.9 | 35.5 | 37.6 | 33.1* | 41.7 | 47.1 | 44.8 |
| Disagree Strongly | 39.7 | 35.2 | 0.0* | 13.4 | 0.0* | 28.5 | 65.3* | 39.7 | 60.3* | 36.3 | 34.7* | 46.9 |
| No Opinion | 26.0 | 30.0 | 39.1* | 22.0 | 35.8 | 40.5 | 31.6 | 38.2 | 38.2* | 29.5 | 29.2* | 39.9 |

* Significant at $p > .95$

## Summary of Findings

### Sophomores/Seniors

The types of extracurricular activities in which both sophomore and seniors participated were very similar. The two top-ranked activities were sports and church activities, the latter being out-of-school activities.

Seniors were more likely to participate in 3 or more activities (highly active) than were sophomores.

The instructional program in which a student was enrolled was related to the degree of participation; students in academic programs were more likely to be either moderately or highly active than students in general or vocational programs.

A direct relationship was observed between grades and participation; the higher the grades were, the greater proportions of participation and vice versa.

A direct relationship was also observed between homework and participation; the groups spending more time on homework were more likely to participate in activities.

Work for pay did not significantly affect the participation level of either sophomores or seniors.

Sophomores and seniors who reported a negative view of discipline practices or who had experienced disciplinary problems were more likely to be inactive. However, these responses identified relatively small percentages of the inactive students. One exception was that seniors who reported cutting classes accounted for about 41% of the inactive seniors.

Negative responses on both the sophomore and senior students' perception of school quality and effectiveness identified disproportionally large numbers of inactive students. Responses indicating dissatisfaction with education and a poor quality of academic instruction were made by nearly one-half of the inactive sophomores and seniors. Students' responses concerning the school's reputation and spirit did not identify as many inactive students.

Sophomore and senior responses to questions regarding their self-concept did not generally identify the activity level of students. Having a positive attitude toward self, feelings of worth, being able to do things as well as others and attributing success to good luck were not identified with consistent participation levels for large proportions of students. An exception was seen for responses concerning interest in school; as degree of interest in school was positively reported, the proportions of highly active sophomores and seniors increased, and as the degree of disinterest increased, the proportions of inactive students increased.

Family background responses showed no consistent patterns of sophomore or senior participation on the basis of family income or church attendance.

Male/Female

The types of activities in which males and females participated tended to follow traditional stereotypes.

There were fewer inactive males and females in academic programs than in general or vocational programs. Larger proportions of female sophomores were highly active than were males regardless of program type, but this difference was not present for seniors where highly active males and females showed no significant differences within the three programs.

Negative self-concept appeared to affect the participation levels of males more than females. Sophomore females were four times more likely to report a negative attitude toward self than were males, but had significantly greater proportions of highly active participants. Sophomore males with negative attitudes toward self were four times more likely to be inactive. This same pattern appeared for sophomores who felt they were unable to do things as well as others; females were more likely to be highly active and males, more likely to be inactive.

Negative self-concept had less impact on senior students. There were no significant differences in male/female participation levels among those with positive attitudes toward self, but senior males with strongly negative attitudes toward self were more likely to be either inactive or highly active than were females. Seniors who felt strongly that they were unable to do things as well as others were reported to be 100% moderately or highly active for females and about 50% inactive for males.

Male and female participation differences on the basis of family income were minimal. Sophomore females from the highest income group were more likely to be highly active. No other significant differences were reported for male and female sophomores and seniors on the basis of income.

Race/Ethnic Origin

Differences in the types of activities in which different racial/ethnic groups participated were few and do not constitute stereotypical patterns.

Participation patterns between instructional programs for racial/ethnic groups followed general findings: students in academic programs were more likely to be active than students in general or vocational programs. Hispanic students were more likely to be inactive than black or white students in all of the three programs, except for senior Hispanic students in an academic program.

Senior black and white students in general and academic programs were equally likely to be highly active, and black vocational students were more likely to be highly active than either white or Hispanic students.

Satisfaction with school was reported by racial/ethnic groups at different activity levels. Proportionally more black dissatisfied students were highly active. Further, more black satisfied students were highly active than were white or Hispanic students. Hispanic students had the highest proportion of satisfied inactive students.

Self-concept responses were reported differently for activity levels among black, white and Hispanic students. Within both the sophomore and senior groups reporting a positive attitude toward self, Hispanic students were more likely to be inactive. Black senior and sophomore students with negative attitudes toward self had the largest proportion of highly active students and the smallest proportion of inactive students; white seniors in this group had the largest proportion of inactive students.

Family income responses showed that of those students in the lowest income level, Hispanic students were most likely to be inactive. Among the sophomore middle-income group, white students were more likely to be inactive, and from the highest income group, Hispanic students were more likely to be inactive. Among seniors, black low-income students had the smallest proportion of inactive students. There were no significant differences for middle- or high-income groups among black and white moderately or highly active students.

State/National Comparisons

Illinois sophomore and senior students were, in general, highly comparable to those in the nation in terms of the degree and types of participation in activities.

Illinois Hispanic students in general, academic and vocational programs reported significantly lower proportions of participation than did Hispanic students in the nation. Sampling error could account for this difference. The participation rates of Hispanic youth merit further study.

A difference was also reported for males/females in terms of self-concept; where Illinois females had higher participation than did males with negative self-concepts, this difference was not reported for males/females in the nation. Although the reason(s) for these differences is unclear, some areas that might provide insight would include information regarding district counseling services, activities offered, etc. These related data were not collected for this study.

## Conclusions

The importance of extracurricular activities in the eyes of students was reflected by the 81% participation rate among sophomores and the 83% rate among seniors. Extracurricular activities are popular among students.

In general, students were most likely to be highly active if they received high grades, were in academic programs, liked school, felt good about themselves and experienced no disciplinary problems. Conversely, students did not participate if the reverse were true.

However, variance among students was substantial. Even among the groups with the most negative indicators, the majority of students were either moderately or highly active. Further, groups with the most positive indicators for participation had inactive students. Profiles became even more difficult to draw when differences between sexes and racial/ethnic groups were considered. A wide variety of factors seemed to be related to the degree of participation reported. For example, negative self-concept responses seemed to strongly identify inactive white male sophomores in Illinois but did not appear to apply to other groups. Hispanic students tended to be less active in general. Black students were more active than white or Hispanic students on the basis of family income at all levels.

Since the question of cause and effect could not be addressed in this study, the basic issue of which comes first remains. The problem is to determine whether students with positive responses and characteristics are drawn to increased participation -- or whether increased participation contributes to the development of positive student responses and characteristics! If the former is true, there seems to be minimal reason for concern. If the latter is true, then efforts to improve, expand and facilitate greater participation are needed.

Research is needed to establish whether or not extracurricular activities enhance student success in the academic, social and/or personal adjustment spheres. The objectives of student participation in activities in terms of compatibility with educational goals and identification of intended and unintended effects to insure that participation is not in conflict, but rather supportive of the instructional program are areas of vital concern. Student recruitment practices and other determinants of participation represent additional important areas where data are absent. Limited financial resources and public demands for increased achievement for students may jeopardize the maintenance of current extracurricular activities offered by schools unless an educational rationale can be established. The reality of such a prediction is documented by the numerous school districts in Illinois who have publicly announced that school sports, band, and other activities would be discontinued if additional funds were not forthcoming (typically during the period when tax or bond referendums were requested). The attitude reflected by these threats is that extracurricular activities are valued by many of society's groups, but are

not considered an essential component of education. To counter these attitudes, an educational rationale based on objective evidence of student benefit or educationally related growth is required to support the continuation or expansion of extracurricular activities in schools.

## Selected References

Bronfenbrenner, V. Two Worlds of Childhood: U.S. and U.S.S.R. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1970.

Coleman, J.S. The Adolescent Society: The Social Life of the Teenager and Its Impact on Education. New York: Free Press, 1961.

Hamilton, S.F., and Zeldin, R. S. "Learning by Watching: Knowledge and Attitudes of Local Government Interns." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Research Association, Montreal, April, 1983.

Long, R.; Buser, R.; and Jackson M. Student Activities in the Seventies, A Survey Report. Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1977. 15BO-88210-079-3.

United States Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. "High School and Beyond: A National Longitudinal Study for the 1980's." National Opinion Research Center, Chicago, 1981.

Appendix

1980 Illinois HSB Student Data Group N's,
Estimated Percentage s.e.(d)'s, and
Minimum Percent Difference for Significance

| Group 1 Public | | Group 2 Public | | s.e.(d) | Minimum Difference in % for Significance p > .95 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Soph. | 1,813 | Seniors | 1,580 | 2.80 | 5.5 |
| Female Soph. | 791 | Male Soph. | 733 | 4.18 | 8.2 |
| Female Soph. | 791 | Female Srs. | 756 | 4.15 | 8.1 |
| Male Soph. | 733 | Male Srs. | 727 | 4.27 | 8.4 |
| Male Srs. | 727 | Female Srs. | 756 | 4.23 | 8.3 |
| Black Soph. | 251 | White Soph. | 1,364 | 5.60 | 11.0 |
| Black Soph. | 251 | Black Srs. | 228 | 7.46 | 14.6 |
| White Soph. | 1,364 | White Srs. | 1,239 | 3.20 | 6.3 |
| White Srs. | 1,239 | Black Srs. | 228 | 5.87 | 11.5 |
| Hisp. Soph. | 95 | Black Soph. | 251 | 9.82 | 19.2 |
| Hisp. Soph. | 95 | White Soph. | 1364 | 8.65 | 17.0 |
| Hisp. Srs. | 57 | Black Srs | 228 | 12.07 | 23.7 |
| Hisp. Srs. | 57 | White Srs | 1239 | 11.04 | 21.6 |
| Gen. Soph. | 899 | Acad. Soph. | 459 | 4.68 | 9.2 |
| Gen. Soph. | 899 | Voc. Soph. | 394 | 4.92 | 9.7 |
| Acad. Soph. | 459 | Voc. Soph. | 394 | 5.60 | 11.0 |
| Gen. Srs. | 633 | Acad. Srs. | 502 | 4.87 | 9.5 |
| Gen. Srs. | 633 | Voc. Srs. | 421 | 5.13 | 10.0 |
| Acad. Srs. | 502 | Voc. Srs. | 421 | 5.39 | 10.6 |
| Gen. Soph. | 899 | Gen. Srs. | 633 | 4.23 | 8.3 |
| Acad. Soph. | 459 | Acad. Srs. | 502 | 5.26 | 10.3 |
| Voc. Soph. | 394 | Voc. Srs. | 421 | 5.71 | 11.2 |
| PLEV 1-Soph. | 354 | PLEV 2-Soph. | 926 | 5.09 | 10.0 |
| PLEV 1-Soph. | 354 | PLEV 3-Soph. | 533 | 5.59 | 11.0 |
| PLEV 2-Soph. | 926 | PLEV 3-Soph. | 533 | 4.43 | 8.7 |
| PLEV 1-Srs. | 274 | PLEV 2-Srs. | 580 | 5.97 | 11.7 |
| PLEV 1-Srs. | 274 | PLEV 3-Srs. | 726 | 5.78 | 11.3 |
| PLEV 2-Srs. | 580 | PLEV 3-Srs. | 726 | 4.54 | 8.9 |
| PLEV 1-Soph. | 354 | PLEV 1-Srs. | 274 | 6.56 | 12.9 |
| PLEV 2-Soph. | 926 | PLEV 2-Srs. | 580 | 4.32 | 8.5 |
| PLEV 3-Soph. | 533 | PLEV 3-Srs. | 526 | 4.65 | 9.1 |

1980 HSB Student Data Comparing Illinois to the U.S.:
Group N's, Estimated Percentage s.e.(d)'s, and
Minimum Percent Difference for Significance

| | Illinois Public | vs. U.S. Public | s.e.(d) | Minimum Difference in % for Significance: p .95 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| All Soph. | 1813 | 23,010 | 1.99 | 3.9 |
| All Seniors | 1580 | 21,547 | 2.12 | 4.2 |
| Female Soph. | 791 | 11,038 | 3.00 | 5.9 |
| Male Soph. | 733 | 10,286 | 3.12 | 6.1 |
| Female Srs. | 756 | 10,663 | 3.07 | 6.0 |
| Male Srs. | 727 | 9,903 | 3.13 | 6.1 |
| Black Soph. | 251 | 3,294 | 5.34 | 10.5 |
| White Soph. | 1,364 | 17,282 | 2.29 | 4.5 |
| Hispanic Soph. | 95 | 1,330 | 8.66 | 17.0 |
| Black Srs. | 228 | 3,063 | 5.59 | 11.0 |
| White Srs. | 1,239 | 16,421 | 2.40 | 4.7 |
| Hispanic Srs. | 57 | 1,072 | 11.08 | 21.7 |
| Gen. Soph. | 899 | 10,728 | 2.83 | 5.5 |
| Acad. Soph. | 459 | 6,813 | 3.93 | 7.7 |
| Voc. Soph. | 394 | 4,968 | 4.27 | 8.4 |
| Gen. Srs. | 633 | 8,211 | 3.36 | 6.6 |
| Acad. Srs. | 502 | 7,195 | 3.76 | 7.4 |
| Voc. Srs. | 421 | 5,791 | 4.11 | 8.1 |
| PLEV 1-Soph. | 354 | 4,188 | 4.51 | 8.8 |
| PLEV 2-Soph. | 926 | 11,572 | 2.78 | 5.5 |
| PLEV 3-Soph. | 533 | 7,250 | 3.66 | 7.2 |
| PLEV 1-Srs. | 274 | 3,264 | 5.13 | 10.0 |
| PLEV 2-Srs. | 580 | 7,731 | 3.51 | 6.9 |
| PLEV 3-Srs. | 726 | 10,552 | 3.13 | 6.1 |

DLN/2226h